

Lombard Farm ~~House~~  
(Poorhouse) House  
Prospect Street  
(Mass. State Route 149)  
~~Mass.~~ Barnstable  
Barnstable County  
Massachusetts

HABS No. MA-963

HABS  
MASS,  
1-BAR,  
4-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D. C. 20240

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

LOMBARD FARM HOUSE  
(POORHOUSE)

HABS No. MA-963

Location: Prospect Street, Massachusetts Highway 149  
between U.S. Highway No. 6 and No. 6 A.

Barnstable.

Barnstable County, Massachusetts.

Present Owner: Town of Barnstable.

Present Use: Vacant.

Significance: Although the Town of Barnstable voted "to build a house for the poor" as early as 1722, the present structure appears to date from 1821, apparently replacing the one built in 1769 for the same purpose. The house was used in some institutional capacity for the Town as late as 1935.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: Circa 1821.
2. Architect, builder: Unknown.
3. Original and subsequent owners:

1711 - Samuel Parker to James Parker (his son)

November 1862 - James Parker (unmarried) to Parker Lombart (sp)  
"son of my sister Sarah Lombart (sp), deceased."

November 13, 1754 - Parker Lombart (sp) to Town of Barnstable, Massachusetts "to be hired out to the highest Bidder by those persons that the Town shall appoint from time to time and the Rent or Income shall be improved for the Use and Benefit of the Poor of the Town of Barnstable from one generation to another and never sold" - Probate Records, County of Barnstable, Vol. 9, page 214.

4. Original plans and construction:

Notes on original plan and construction of building: The clue to the original plan may be found in the Town of Barnstable Annual Report for the Year Ending December 31, 1912 in which Alexander B. Chase writes: "The house, as near as can be learned, is not the original in which Mr. Lombart (sp) lived . . . . the original stood more to the north, and the present house was built about 100 years ago. It is solid and in good repair and consists of 25 rooms. The inmates' part consists of dining room, sitting room, kitchen, washroom and sixteen sleeping rooms with 18 beds". Referring to the plans measured in 1968 and to an 1889 photograph (see Appendix), it is possible that Rooms 1-B, 1-C, 1-G and 1-H were assigned to the inmates on the first floor and connected to the one-story wing on the northeast. Two windows in this wing appearing in the photograph and a third window (lost in the perspective view) would indicate three sleeping rooms on each side of a central corridor. The remaining rooms on the first floor were probably assigned to the caretaker and for kitchen and dining use. It is probable that the stairway to inmates' rooms above was originally located in Room 1-C, being relocated when the new entrance was added in Room 1-D. Rooms 1-H and 1-I, as well as the existing two story wing on the northeast were added certainly after 1889 and possibly after 1912. It is assumed that the second floor was altered to create several of the existing large rooms, and originally there were probably five sleeping rooms of equal size on the south front and five sleeping rooms on the rear. These rooms would have averaged a little over 7'.

5. Alterations and additions:

1886 - hard pine flooring and masonry work.

1888 - painting by F. L. Sturgess.

1911 - water plant installed, 2-HP gasoline pump in basement to tank in attic.

1923 - lighting plant installed.

B. Historical Events and Persons Connected with the Structure:

1. Colonel James Otis, father of James Otis, the Patriot was a member of the building committee which decided to "take down the old house and rebuilt on the place where it stands" the earlier 1769 structure.

2. Dorothea L. Dix, noted social reformer, appears to have visited the farm in 1853, reporting "four females in pens and stalls. Two chained certainly. I think all." Certain of the rooms in Barn 2 on the northeast contain evidence that they were used for inmates who might have required this type of confinement. (See HABS No. MA-964)

C. Sources of Information:

1. Old views: One view, 1889, part of a collection made for 250th Anniversary of Barnstable, Index #6003, located in local library.

2. Bibliography:

1. Town of Barnstable, Annual Reports, 1881-1947, Patriot Press, Hyannis, Massachusetts. Note: Specific itemized references to the Almshouse end in 1918. A report is also published for year ending 1967 by the Lombard Home Committee, James H. Ellis, Kenneth M. Bailey, Ruth L. Carlson, Frederic D. Conant and George Johnson.

2. Secondary and published sources:

Deyo, Simeon L., History of Barnstable County Massachusetts, p. 374.

Freeman, History of Cape Cod, Vol. 11, pp. 302, 330.

Trayser, Donald G., Barnstable, Three Centuries of a Cape Cod Town, (Hyannis, Massachusetts, F. B. A. F. P. Goss, 1939)

3. Likely sources not yet investigated:

Barnstable Patriot, weekly newspaper published since 1830, microfilm available in Curtis Library, Barnstable.

History of Lombard Family, unpublished manuscript in Hyannis Public Library

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PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: One of the few remaining examples of an early New England Poor Farm, which was built and used from the beginning for this purpose. Although it was enlarged at a later date, the original part is identifiable.
2. Condition of fabric: Fair, but in need of maintenance.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: Rectangular 106' x 59'. The original section of this two-and-one-half story Cape Cod dwelling is over a partial basement on the southwest and measures approximately 46'-0". There are two structural bays in both directions, the typical bay being 23' x 16'. A two-story addition on the southwest and a large wing on the northeast apparently date from the 20th century.
2. Foundations: Large granite stones. The exterior wall measures 18" roughly, and the interior bearing wall is 10".
3. Wall construction, finish, color: Exterior wooden bearing walls are covered with wooden clapboards, 5" to the weather. The white paint is deteriorating.

Corner boards and trim are painted gray.

4. Structural system: Structural bays of the original structure are framed by 8"x8" posts. First floor framing, visible in the cellar, consists of 10" wooden sills, 7½" deep and bearing on the stone walls. 3" x 7" floor joists, 2'-0" o.c., span between the exterior stone wall and a 7" x 10" beam under the stair hall. This beam, in turn, bears on southwest foundation wall and a 6" x 6" post which is 7' - 0" in from the wall. The direction of the framing changes at this point. A 7" x 10" header beam, 2' - 6" from the face of the chimney supports 4" x 8" floor joists, 3' - 0" o.c., with mortise and tenon joints. Floor boards, varying from 8" to 15" in width are 1" thick. A 4"x 4" post and 2" x 4" blocking shores up the main beam. Structure in the rear of the cellar is covered with modern cement plaster. Roof framing consists of 3" x 7" rafters, random spaced 30" to 40", which are tied by 2" x 6" collar beams notched into them. Rafters bear on a 6" x 6" wall plate. the entire roof framing appears to be relatively recent. The 1" roof boards are carried on 9" ceiling joists. The gable and wall is framed with 3½ - 4" wide studs spaced approximately 2'-6" o.c.

5. Porches, stoops, bulkheads: The earliest porch, on the central axis of the original house, is enclosed and extends 4'-6" from the south-east wall. The walls and gable are shingled. A second porch replaced a former window opening and other stoops and entrances are later additions.
6. Chimneys: The brick chimneys are centered on the roof ridge of the original structure, rising 5'-9" above the ridge. A later chimney has been built on the rear.

7. Openings:

- a. Doorways and doors: The original entrance wooden door is four paneled with a transom of five 6" x 9" lights. Plain unmolded trim frames the opening. The kitchen entrance door has vertical beaded boards on the inner face with an inset panel of wide boards on exterior face. Total thickness is 1½".
- b. Windows and shutters: Original windows are symmetrically placed, and double-hung with 8" x 12" lights. Later windows have 8" x 11-½" lights. Original trim is 3 ¾" unmolded wood projecting 1½" from the wall. Cellar windows on the north and west walls are 13" x 33", with concrete areaways before them.

10. Roof:

- a. Shape covering: Original structure and a similar roof on the northeast wing have an asphalt shingled roof.

An asphalt shingled gabled roof covers the original structure.

The long northeast wing has wooden shingles. Low-pitched hipped roofs cover the small wings.

- b. Cornice, eaves: A molded wooden cornice, incorporating a concealed wooden gutter, extends 1'-0" at the eave line.

Metal downspouts drain into underground drains.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans

- a. First floor: The first floor has four symmetrically placed rooms in line across the southeast front, the two central rooms are wider than those on the ends. The two middle rooms, each have a door leading to the enclosed early porch. Stairs are on the narrow southeast end room, the cellar stairs are below.

A later door leads to the exterior front. In 1889 a sunroom was added to the west, left of the stairs. (See Photograph) All of the rooms across the front have doors connecting to a series of rooms on the northwest wall which have been altered to accomodate kitchen and dining spaces. A narrow corridor on the eastern end separates the front sitting room from the kitchen and leads to the wing added after 1889 on the northeast. This wing contains sleeping rooms and bathrooms on either side of a central corridor on both floors.

- b. Second floor of original house: A line of rooms on the southeast averaging 13'-2" to 14' x 6" is separated from the hallway by a line of deep closets and two fireplaces.

2. Stairways: The main stairway which may have been relocated from the opposite end of the house is enclosed between the sitting room wall and a 5" wing wall. It has twelve treads at 10" and thirteen risers at 7- $\frac{1}{4}$ ".

Cellar stairs below it are enclosed in modern cement plaster walls. Stairs to the attic are approximately centered perpendicular to the second floor hallway and enclosed with wooden walls.

3. Floors: Hard pine floors apparently were installed in 1886 (see historical report). Other floors are oak in the kitchen and brick or concrete in the cellar.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: In the earliest rooms several of the walls and ceiling are painted plaster. Wallpaper above a painted board wainscot is used in the east sitting room and in the small entrance porch. Wallboard is also found on some ceilings. All rooms in the newer wing have wallboard walls and ceilings.
5. Doorways and doors: The doors in the early house on both floors are 1- $\frac{1}{8}$ " thick with four raised panels on one face only. On the second floor are a few rail and vertical plank doors, 1" thick.
6. Decorative features and trim: The majority of the windows in the early structure are set in plain frames with 1/2" wooden reveal and no head or jamb surface trim. Doorways are generally trimmed by 2" x 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ " members with 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ " molded trim in the reveal. The majority of the rooms have chair rails 32" above the floor with either plain or molded crown member.

Wainscots consist of two wide flush boards, some have a 2" horizontal batten applied at the joist. There is a narrow picture molding at the ceilings of the two front sitting rooms. Base moldings are plain boards 3" high.

7. Lighting: Electric lights were installed in 1923.
8. Heating: Modern central heat is now used. Brick faced fireplaces are in both sitting rooms.

Site:

General setting: This five and one-half acre farm is on the north side of Massachusetts State Highway 149, midway between U.S. 6 and 6-A. The front of the house faces the road on the south in a southeast-southwest direction.

Outbuildings: Approximately 30' to the north of the house is a line of outbuildings. What appears to be the earliest of these is described in a separate report.

Landscaping, walks and enclosures: Six large trees separate the highway from the lawn in the front of the house. A circular driveway, grass terrace and trees complete the landscaping.

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